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ABSTRACT

Contained are the results and conclusions of a survey conducted in December, 1969, to ascertain the extent to which occupational deferments are an important factor in manpower utilization. A questionnaire was sent to employers in the following major employment categories - aerospace and defense; chemicals, metals and petroleum; construction and mining; electrical equipment; machinery and manufactured products; public utilities; research and technical services, and government agencies. These employers were asked to report the number of men between ages 19 and 26 who were currently occupationally deferred in Class II-A or for whom such deferments were being sought, and the total number of men with similar qualifications. They were also asked to give their estimate of the effect on the company if about half of these deferred men were drafted at random. The main findings are that (1) 13,310 in Class II-A are currently employed by 279 employers, (2) another 2,938 deferments are being requested, (3) the effect of abruptly eliminating deferments would be most widespread in the aerospace, research, chemical and petroleum industries, and (4) the effect would be focused most heavily on specific employers in nearly all industries, rather than on entire industries. (LC)

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OCCUPATIONAL DEFERMENTS IN U.S. INDUSTRY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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A Report by the Engineering Manpower Commission of
Engineers Joint Council and the
Scientific Manpower Commission

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ADDENDUM

On April 23, 1970 President Nixon announced the elimination of new occupational deferments after 12:00 noon of that date. However, his decision to allow all men now deferred in Class II-A, or for whom such deferments have been requested, to be processed under the previous rules will tend to minimize the effect on employers of technical manpower.

The Military Selective Service Act of 1967 as amended continues to provide that "the President is authorized, under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe, to provide for the deferment from training and service in the Armed Forces of any or all categories of persons whose employment in industry, agriculture, or other occupations or employment . . . or whose activities in graduate study, research, or medical, dental, veterinary, optometric, osteopathic, scientific, pharmaceutical, chiropractic, chirpodal, or other endeavors is found to be necessary to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest."

OCCUPATIONAL DEFERMENTS IN U.S. INDUSTRY

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Many employers in the United States have come to rely quite heavily on occupational deferments to retain key employees with critical skills, according to information reported by 293 organizations to the Engineering Manpower Commission of Engineers Joint Council and the Scientific Manpower Commission. The abrupt elimination of occupational deferments followed by the induction of a sizeable percentage of previously deferred men drafted at random, according to their lottery sequence numbers and without consideration for the specific work they are doing, could have serious disruptive effects on some of these employers. The effect would be most widespread in the aerospace, research, chemical, and petroleum industries; and more localized in other industries. Some federal and state governmental agencies also would be adversely affected.

Those companies that would be hardest hit are the ones in which a substantial proportion of critical personnel are now occupationally deferred in Class II-A. These companies are widely dispersed geographically and throughout all sectors of industry. The effect of abruptly eliminating deferments would apparently be focused most heavily on specific employers in nearly all industries, and only to a lesser extent on entire industries. Heavily industrialized areas would naturally tend to be affected the most.

In general, practically every company or plant that now has men holding occupational deferments believes that its operations would be disrupted by the abrupt elimination of such deferments. Only four percent of the occupational deferments reported in this survey are in companies where employers anticipate that their loss would have little or no effect.

The Engineering and Scientific Manpower Commissions are not in a position to evaluate the importance of deferred individuals to their companies or to the national health, safety, or interest. Under existing provisions of the Military Selective Service Act of 1967 as amended, and Selective Service Regulations, occupational deferments are restricted to men who are engaged in activity necessary to the national health, safety, or interest; whose removal would cause a material loss of effectiveness in such activity; and who cannot be replaced because of a shortage of persons with their qualifications or skills in such activity. Each individual occupational deferment has met these criteria to the satisfaction of the employer and the Selective Service System through its 4,000 Local Boards and various Appeal Boards.

Since 1950 the Manpower Commissions have had as one of their chief concerns the problem of effective utilization of engineering and scientific talent to meet national needs. In the Commissions' view, the abrupt induction by random sequence of large numbers of men whose work has heretofore been considered sufficiently important to justify their occupational deferment, would not be conducive to effective utilization of their special skills.

HOW THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

In an effort to ascertain the extent to which occupational deferments are an important factor in manpower utilization, the Engineering Manpower Commission of Engineers Joint Council and the Scientific Manpower Commission surveyed a large group of employers including some government agencies, most of which have regularly provided manpower data for EMC surveys. Although this group is not purported to be representative of national employment as a whole, it includes large and small employers in all areas of technology and throughout the United States. These employers were asked to report the number of men between ages 19 and 26 who were currently occupationally deferred in Class II-A or for whom such deferments were being sought, and the total number of men with similar qualifications. These employers were also asked to give their estimate of the effect on the company if about half of these deferred men were drafted at random, without regard for their particular specialty, under the lottery system of selecting men for induction. A reproduction of the actual questionnaire is appended. Replies were received from 293 employers. Key statistical findings from 279 of these replies are tabulated in this report. The other 14 respondents wrote letters setting forth their concern about occupational deferments.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Replies were grouped into eight major employment categories, for which the following data were reported:

Category	Employers		Men in II-A		Deferments Being Requested		Total Men With Similar Skills	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Aerospace & Defense	21	8	4123	28	702	21	43333	22
Chemicals, Metals, Petroleum	44	16	2862	22	661	23	27311	16
Construction & Mining	26	9	619	5	195	7	5814	4
Electrical Equipment	26	9	2884	22	485	17	69224	42
Machinery & Mfg. Products	76	27	1447	11	394	14	13068	8
Public Utilities	39	14	409	3	199	7	3902	2
Research & Technical Services	27	10	614	5	182	6	6297	4
Government Agencies	20	7	352	3	120	4	2534	2
Totals	279	100	13310	100	2938	100	171483	100

ESTIMATING THE EFFECT OF ABRUPTLY ELIMINATING OCCUPATIONAL DEFERMENTS

Respondents were asked to select from a five-point scale of effects, as follows: extremely harmful, seriously hampering, moderately disruptive, inconvenient, and no effect. Of the 279 respondents, 64 reported that they had no men deferred and no deferments being sought. Thirty-six of

these also indicated that they had no deferrable employees at all. As might be expected, these 64 employers anticipated little or no disruption from the elimination of deferments. The breakdown of all 279 replies was as follows:

Reply	Employers No.	Employers %	Men in II-A or Deferment Requested No.	Men in II-A or Deferment Requested %	Total Men With Similar Skills No.	Total Men With Similar Skills %
Extremely harmful	55	20	2383	15	8795	5
Seriously hampering	97	35	6735	41	44315	26
Moderately disruptive	47	17	6400	39	64225	37
Inconvenient	41	15	712	4	53346	31
No effect	39	14	18	--	802	--
Totals	279	100	16248	100	171483	100

It is clear from these figures that the abrupt elimination of occupational deferments would hit employers unevenly. Seventy-two percent of the respondents expected that their companies would suffer moderate disruption or worse, but these companies accounted for 96% of the deferments. In general, companies appear to anticipate difficulty in direct proportion to the percentage of deferred men in the group with critical skills. Those who envisioned little or no problem either had very few deferred employees or had a large number of men with similar skills available to replace inductees.

EFFECT ON DIFFERENT INDUSTRY GROUPS

The chemical, research, and aerospace industries would be most widely affected by the elimination of occupational deferments. In other industries the effect would apparently be severe in some companies but minimal in others. These conclusions are evident from the percentage of respondents in each industry who reported that the loss of employees to random induction would be either extremely harmful or seriously hampering:

Industry	Percent of Respondents That Would Be Harmed Based On: No. of Employers	Percent of Respondents That Would Be Harmed Based On: No. of Deferred Men
Chemicals, Metals, Petroleum	68	66
Research & Technical Services	67	90
Aerospace & Defense	67	43
Electrical Equipment	65	25
Construction & Mining	58	75
Machinery & Other Manufacturing	49	93
Public Utilities	44	95
Government Agencies	20	54

In the construction, machinery, and utilities groups the figures indicate that most of the deferments are concentrated in roughly half of the companies. The electrical equipment industry would show a similar pattern except that one very large employer accounting for about 60% of the deferred men in that industry felt that the elimination of occupational deferments would be only moderately disruptive.

In the government agencies there seems to be a localization of deferments in certain state highway departments and other agencies while many others have no deferments at all. Public utility companies exhibit a similar but less extreme pattern, for the same reason.

EFFECT ON DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

Although no detailed statistical analysis was made according to company location, replies to the survey showed a wide geographical distribution. Those respondents who reported that their organizations would suffer moderate to extreme disruption from the elimination of occupational deferments represent 34 states plus the District of Columbia. The heaviest concentrations are from Illinois, Pennsylvania, California, and New York, which states also have high concentrations of industry and engineering employment. The number of respondents from each state is as follows:

Illinois	26	Wisconsin	7
Pennsylvania	23	Indiana	5
California	21	Washington	5
New York	21	Maryland	4
Michigan	10	Minnesota	4
Ohio	10	Missouri	4
Texas	10	Virginia	4
New Jersey	8	Louisiana	3
Connecticut	7	District of Columbia	3
Massachusetts	7	Oklahoma	2

In addition, there was one from each of the following states: Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

The widespread dispersion of these respondents clearly indicates that the elimination of occupational deferments could have nationwide effects on industry, perhaps lasting for several years until recruiting and training programs could produce adequate replacements.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This survey was prepared and conducted by Mrs. Betty M. Vetter, Executive Director of the Scientific Manpower Commission, and John D. Alden, Executive Secretary of the Engineering Manpower Commission of Engineers Joint Council. Questionnaires were tallied and this report was written by Mr. Alden with the assistance of Miss Carol Iceland and Mrs. Betty Sue Lewis of the EMC staff.

APPENDIX I

Facsimile of Questionnaire

December 1969

To employers of engineers and scientists:

Many members of Congress and others in both government and private positions favor abolition of occupational deferments, believing them to be unnecessary under the Random Selection Plan which concentrates induction calls on 19-year olds plus men up to age 26 when their deferments for school or other reasons have ended. According to Senator Edward Kennedy, "The National Security Council and the previous Secretary of Labor, Willard Wirtz, have both said there was no national interest requirement in continuing occupational deferments."

Senator John Stennis has announced hearings in the Senate Armed Services Committee beginning in early February 1970 to consider further revision of the Military Selective Service Act prior to June 30, 1971.

The Scientific and Engineering Manpower Commissions have worked actively over the past several years to retain and strengthen the concept that the national security and viability require recognition and provision for the nation's continuing needs for educated personnel, including their training and proper utilization. We have been invited to present our views to the Armed Services Committee, and we feel it is essential that we have information from the industrial community regarding your need for continuation of occupational deferments.

We are asking that you provide us with the information requested below, so that we may have an accurate picture of industry's needs for provision for occupational deferments, both in 1970 and three to four years hence.

Betty M. Vetter
Scientific Manpower Commission

John D. Alden
Engineering Manpower Commission

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS PRE-ADDRESSED CARD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

1. How many men between the ages of 19 and 26 (as of January 1, 1970) currently employed by your organization are now occupationally deferred (Class II-A)? _____

2. For how many additional men 19-26 are you presently seeking occupational deferments? _____

3. Approximately how many employees with the kinds of skills and work activities represented by 1 and 2 are currently employed by your organization? (Include men reported in 1 and 2 in this number.) _____

4. If Armed Forces needs continue at the level estimated by the Department of Defense for 1970, about half of all draft-eligible men may be required to enter the Armed Forces. If occupational deferments were abolished, as proposed by Senator Kennedy and others, the men covered in 1 and 2 would be inducted randomly according to the numbers drawn in the December 1, 1969 lottery without regard to particular skills or needs. Please indicate the degree of disruption you believe this would cause your company.

CHECK ONE

_____Extremely Harmful _____Seriously Hampering _____Moderately Disruptive
_____Inconvenient _____No Effect

Company _____ Address _____

Person Supplying Information _____ Title _____

If you have additional information or comments pertinent to occupational deferments, please mail them separately to the Scientific Manpower Commission, 2101 Constitution Avenue N. W., Washington, D. C. 20418.